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Pueblo-North Korea Bjt NL 500 2 takes total 850

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WASHINGTON AP - The White House and other top administration sources passed the ominous word Wednesday that Russia so far has spruned U.S. pleas to act as go-between with North Korea in settling the Pueblo dispute by diplomatic means.

Officials told newsmen "all appropriate diplomatic channels" were being pursued but they did not rule out the use of force.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk called the North Korean seizure of the U.S. Navy intelligence ship off North Korea Monday night "an act of war."

Rusk advised the North Koreans to "cool it" and said they would be "well advised to pull back here."

The secretary said the United States intends to get back the ship which, with its 83 crewmen, was apparently forced to a North Korean port. Rusk declined to talk about what future course of action this country may take.

The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Enterprise and three escorts were reported taking position in the Sea of Japan. South Korean sources in Seoul said the 75,000-ton carrier and its escorts would take station 12 miles off Wonsan Bay to await developments. North Korea maintains its territorial waters extend 12 miles out from shore.

At the White House, the to-level National Security Council, which ponders major strategic moves, met in full dress session on the problem.

One of the first U.S. moves, after the seizure of the 935-ton Pueblo became known, was to ask the Soviet Union to act as a diplomatic channel between the United States and Communist North Korea in hopes of resolving the tense dispute without shooting.

But White House sources said such efforts "have not had satisfactory results."

The same word was circulated elsewhere in the government.

White House press secretary George Christian stressed the United States still is hopeful "that the matter still can be settled through diplomatic channels."

But, Christian said, the U.S. government "is organized and planning" under President Johnson's direction to deal with the matter.

In other developments:

-The official North Korean Central News Agency claimed that the skipper of the Pueblo, Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher, had "confessed" that his vessel intruded deep into North Korea's territorial waters on an espionage assignment for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. The broadcast quoted Bucher as saying his ship had spied on installations along the Soviet Union's east coast as well as in North Korea.

-Christian insisted that the Pueblo was in international waters when it was captured, "according to the best information that we have." State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey also said the Pueblo was "well beyond" the 12-mile territorial limit claimed by North Korea.

The Pentagon has said the Pueblo was boarded while she was about 25 miles off North Korea and that she was in essentially the same location when first accosted an hour and 45 minutes earlier.

-Navy sources said the Pueblo had been approached by North Korean patrol boat before, but not threatened, during at least 10 days of cruising in the area.

The Navy sources advanced this information as a possible explanation of why the Pueblo's skipper did not call for help until he was actually being boarded.

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